DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 358 225 UD 029 299

TITLE African American Male Task Force Report.
INSTITUTION North Carolina State Dept. of Public Instruction, Raleigh.
PUB DATE Jul 92
NOTE 47p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; Black Education; *Black Students; College Attendance; Curriculum Development; Demography; Dropout Rate; Educational Environment; *Educational Improvement; Elementary School Students; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; *Males; *Outcomes of Education; Preschool Children; Preschool Education; School Districts; Secondary School Students; State Surveys
IDENTIFIERS *African Americans; *North Carolina

ABSTRACT

A review of North Carolina public preschool, elementary school, and secondary school education was done with the aim of increasing school districts' effectiveness in improving outcomes for all students, particularly improving the low achievement and postsecondary school attendance rates of African American males. Focus was on determining the status of these students, compiling and evaluating educational research to determine applicability for programs in North Carolina, and identifying existing resources available to African American children in the state. The effort proceeded through an evaluation of research findings and statistical profiles, becoming familiar with state programs and resources, and working with a national expert on multicultural education. The review developed recommendations in the areas of staff development, curriculum and instruction, and other initiatives. Specifically, the review called for staff development to increase abilities to work with diverse students; inclusion of the perspectives, contributions, and impact of a variety of cultural groups in school curricula; and extension of the work of the Task Force through the establishment of a Council on the African American Male. Contains 48 references. (JB)

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North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

African American Male

Task Force Report

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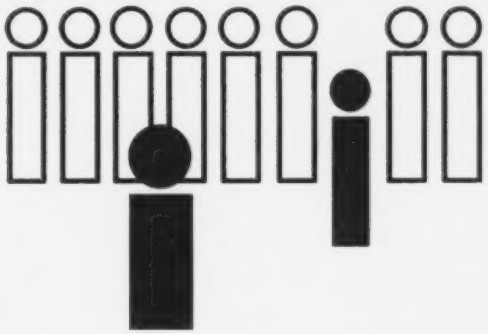
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction ■ Bob Etheridge, State Superintendent

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE



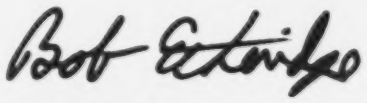
TASK FORCE REPORT

Bob Etheridge, State Superintendent
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
Raleigh, North Carolina
July, 1992

FOREWORD

This report represents many months of work by the members of the African-American Male Task Force, an interdepartmental group that was formed during the 1992 school year. The Task Force compiled statistics and data at the national, State and local levels on the current status of the African-American male.

Based on the research findings, the Task Force's recommendations focused on achievement outcomes and improved attendance rates for African-American male students in North Carolina. It is hoped that this final report will be useful to administrators and teachers who are both meeting the challenges and making use of the opportunities presented by increasingly diverse populations in our schools.



Bob Etheridge
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Task Force studying the African American male wishes to acknowledge the visionary leadership of State Superintendent Bob Etheridge and Dr. Sammie Campbell Parrish, former Assistant Superintendent for Program Services, who recognized the need to do additional research on underserved segments of the school population. Additionally, the Task Force is grateful to contributing researchers, writers, staff members and the Department of Public Instruction family for the time and support given this committee.

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Emmett Kimbrough, Chairman	Curriculum and Instruction Compensatory Education
Gloria Bowman	Media & Technology Services Education Information Services
David Bryant	Student Services Pupil Personnel Services
Pamela Davis	Vocational Education Preparatory and Transitional Services
John Leak	Student Services Alcohol and Drug Defense
Laura Mast	Program Services Early Childhood Programs
Wandra Polk	Program Services Curriculum and Instruction
Larry Tucker	Exceptional Children Special Programs
Dwight Whitted	Student Services Pupil Personnel Services

PURPOSE

Charge to African American Male Task Force

One of the major goals for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction in 1991-92 was to increase the effectiveness of LEAs in improving outcomes for all students. In order to reach that goal, Program Services Objective E indicated, that "by June, 1992, the Office of Program Services will have examined and studied issues related to low achievement and post-secondary attendance rates of specified subgroups: African Americans, particularly Black males. . . Findings to be utilized in future policy decisions and program planning efforts."

The task force was created and charged with the following responsibilities:

1. to compile statistics and data at the national, state and local levels on the current status of the African American male;

2. to disaggregate this data to show its relationship to North Carolina; and,

3. to use this research to make recommendations to enhance African American males' achievement outcomes and attendance rates in the public schools of our state.

A preliminary report was submitted to Superintendent Etheridge on June 23, 1992, with the final task force report submitted in July, 1992.

Process Task Force Used

The task force focused on research findings as well as statistical profiles and organized these studies into an Executive Summary and Task Force Report. Task force members accepted challenges related to their positions with the Department of Public Instruction or of particular concern to them and immersed themselves in current research on the selected topics, becoming resident "experts." The researchers were responsible for materials related to their topics and used resources in Education Information Services as well as other state information services.

In addition to research, the committee also worked with a national expert on multicultural education, Forrest D. Toms. Toms, Director of the Institute for Multicultural Education and Training (IMET) at Lenoir-Rhyne College (Hickory, North Carolina) was invited to review the Task Force findings and speak to its members. According to Toms, several theories on multicultural education have relevance to the task force because a serious paradigm shift is needed in public education to improve the African American male's performance in public schools.

Toms advised discussing issues regarding the African American male student with representative students. He concluded his discussion by suggesting that the Task Force focus on the following questions:

1. How can we lay the foundation statewide for diversity in education?

2. What are the challenges facing school systems with an increasingly diverse population?

3. How can we get top level administrators and teachers to implement educational programs that better serve the needs of African American male students?

Limitations for Task Force

Task force members served voluntarily and accomplished a great deal in a short amount of time; however, this report reflects several constraints that task force members believe were important:

1. Restraints of time:
   a. prevented interaction with experts on the African American male.
   b. prevented committee members from touring model educational and motivational programs in North Carolina as well as nationally to support or refute research.
   c. prevented interactions with other task forces dealing with similar concerns to compare findings.

2. Lack of a statistical expert on the task force to interpret test data specific to North Carolina.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RESEARCH FOCUS ONE:

To determine the status of North Carolina's African American students in Pre-K through Grade 12 with special focus on the African American Male

OBJECTIVE ONE:
To compile statistical data relating to education

Summary Comments:
Research on the educational status of the African American male reveals some alarming statistics. African American males are more likely than other groups to score lower on standardized achievement tests, drop out of school before graduation, be labeled as mentally retarded, be expelled from school, and be placed in low ability groups. Even given the improvements made in recent years, statistics suggest that North Carolina's public school system is failing to provide an adequate education for far too many African American students. **(See The Task Force Report, pp. 12 - 14 for discussion.)**

OBJECTIVE TWO:
To compile statistical data relating to the family

Summary Comments:
Societal changes since the mid-1960's among both African Americans and whites have brought higher rates of marital breakup, decreased rates of marriage, rapidly rising numbers of households headed by females, and increasing numbers of children being reared in single-parent families. These changes, however, have been much greater among African Americans than among Caucasians. **(See The Task Force Report, pp. 15-16 for discussion.)**

OBJECTIVE THREE:
To compile statistical data relating to the community

Summary Comments:
Based on the examination of data, no significant gains were made in the median earnings of African American families between 1979 and 1989, while the median earnings of Caucasian families continued to grow. Even though median earnings of African American males are lower than the majority population, they earn slightly more than their female counterparts. Reports indicate that almost one-third of African Americans were poor by joint standards in 1989. Research also reveals that African American males are incarcerated in larger numbers than their Caucasian male counterparts in North Carolina. African American males are the most common offenders in violent and property crimes. On the other hand, more Caucasian males are placed on probation and parole than African American males. **(See The Task Force Report, pp. 17- 19 for discussion.)**

OBJECTIVE FOUR:
To compile statistical data relating to low achievement and the postsecondary attendance rate of African American males

Summary Comments:
Statistical data were pulled from a questionnaire designed to collect the following information: (a) the reasons African American males are low achievers while enrolled in high school; (b) the postsecondary attendance rate of the subjects, and; (c) the reasons they are not enrolled in postsecondary institutions. In the survey, the majority of the students interviewed related their lack of achievement in school to either a low value for education, a lack of motivation, or lack of academic skills. Over 50 percent of the subjects in another study were not enrolled in postsecondary institutions. The lack of financial support (O'Neal, 1991; Fuhrman, Amour and Werner, 1991) and the preference to work were the major reasons for their not attending college. **(See The Task Force Report, pp. 20- 22 for discussion.)**

RESEARCH FOCUS TWO:

To compile and evaluate educational research to determine applicability for programs in North Carolina

OBJECTIVE ONE:
To provide a summary of early childhood research findings and the implications for the education of African American males

Summary Comments:
Thirty years of longitudinal research on the impact of didactic (teacher directed, abstract focus) and flexible (child-initiated, concrete, exploratory focus) programs

for young children reveals that flexible programs produce more positive results. In determining the implications for African American males to be found in this body of research, it was necessary to analyze the percent of African American males included in the populations of the various studies. A composite picture of race and gender in the total body of research yields a 40-45 percent African American male population. **(See The Task Force Report, pp. 23 - 27 for discussion.)**

OBJECTIVE TWO:
To provide an overview of the research on the impact of cultural differences in language acquisition on African American children's success in school

Summary Comments:
Research indicates that cultural variance in language acquisition has a dramatic influence on the language that children use and understand when they go to school. Children from low-income, African American families are at a significant disadvantage in trying to cope with the language of school because language usage in the home is markedly different from typical school language. It is also different from the language used for screening and assessment purposes. Variant interaction patterns can be found among low-income African American families. **(See The Task Force Report, pp. 28- 31 for discussion.)**

OBJECTIVE THREE:
To provide an overview of curriculum strategies used by public schools in other states to address the needs of African American males and determine their feasibility for North Carolina

Summary Comments:
An overview of curriculum strategies used by public schools across the nation to meet the needs of African American males reveals certain commonalities among programs. They aim to insulate African American male students from the often hostile forces of the community — unemployment, drugs, violence, and poverty by giving them strong gender and cultural identity. They use African American male adults as teachers, mentors, and role models, and they place a strong focus on the use of Afrocentric or multicultural instructional materials. **(See The Task Force Report, pp. 32 - 34 for discussion.)**

RESEARCH FOCUS THREE:
To identify existing resources available to African American children in North Carolina

OBJECTIVE ONE:
To compile a list of current funding sources for such programs

Summary Comments:
In collaborative ventures to create new services for African American children, resources of all kinds must be pooled and reconfigured to provide more comprehensive services. The way in which schools and human service agencies use existing resources, or the manner in which essential new resources are deployed, can be changed to create more comprehensive services to all children. Integrating resources can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of educational, health, and other social services to all children — especially those whose needs are greatest. **(See The Task Force Report, page 35 for discussion.)**

OBJECTIVE TWO:
To compile a representative annotated list of current programs that use existing resources in a collaborative model

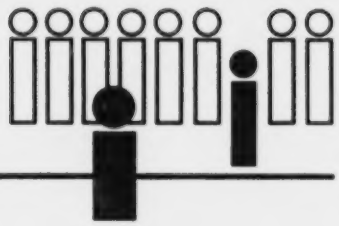
Summary Comments:
Across the nation a multiplicity of programs are nurturing, prodding, and moving traditionally underrepresented minority children through the education pipeline. Programs that successfully address the multiple problems of at-risk children and families have a number of common characteristics. They are comprehensive, coherent, integrated, and flexible, and they cross traditional bureaucratic and professional boundaries. They deal with the child as part of the family and the family as part of the community. They make sure that staff members have the time, training, and skills necessary to build relationships of trust and respect with children and families. And they design the content of their services to address the special needs of the people they are serving. **(See The Task Force Report, pp. 36 - 37 for discussion.)**

RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

Rec. No.	Title	Responsibility	Task
STAFF DEVELOPMENT			
SD 1	Cultural sensitivity training	DPI and local education agencies	Develop and conduct workshops that increase the ability of administrators, staff and teachers to work with diverse students.
SD 2	Teacher education training	Institutions of higher education	Provide prospective teachers with requisite skills to deal with an increasingly diverse school population.
SD 3	Alternative instructional strategies	DPI	Provide teachers and administrators with alternative instructional strategies to common practices.
CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION			
CI 1	**A.** Curriculum revisions	DPI	Ensure that current curriculum revisions include the perspectives, contributions, and impact of a variety of cultural groups, including African Americans.
CI 1	**B.** Assessment	DPI	Develop multi-faceted ways to evaluate students such as portfolios, writing samples, and criterion-referenced tests.
CI 2	Effective Schools	DPI	Reaffirm agency's commitment to the philosophy that "all students can learn."
CI 3	**A. & B.** Self Esteem	DPI/local education agencies	Help students develop a sense of self-worth and positive self-images.
CI 3	**C.** Parental Training Programs	DPI/local education agencies	Continue efforts to increase the ability of parents and caregivers to support their children's education and well-being.
CI 4	BEP	DPI State Board of Ed. NC General Assembly	Continue their commitment to full funding of BEP.

Rec. No.	Title	Responsibility	Task
INITIATIVES			
IN 1	Task Force continuation	DPI	Extend the work of Task Force through the establishment of a Council on the African American Male.
IN 2	Inclusion	DPI/local education agencies	Include African American males in defining and solving the problem.
IN 3	Shortage of African American male teachers	DPI/ local education agencies	Support the recruitment of African American male educators.
IN 4	Pilots	DPI	Earmark Research and Development dollars to fund at least three pilots that use research-based strategies and approaches to support African American males and their families from birth to graduation from high school.
IN 5	Legislation	DPI	Support legislation to provide full funding for programs for unserved preschool children and their families.
IN 6	"One Voice Community"	DPI	Support and expand "One Voice Community" concept.
IN 7	Community-based programs	DPI	Provide funding and technical assistance to community-based programs that empower the African American male with skills, self-confidence, and sense of achievement.
IN 8	Mentoring	DPI/local education agencies	Support and encourage with technical assistance the establishment of mentoring programs using African American males.
IN 9	Statistical data	DPI	Compile and maintain data relating to African American males.

Task Force Report



INTRODUCTION

. . .we often read about well-heeled individuals who lead groups of influential citizens on quests to save the manatee, crocodile, bald eagle, the Everglades, Grand Canyon, alligators, whales, the petrified forest, the Sequoia trees, [yet] no visible group seems to be interested in expending any energy to save the African-American male.

Willie J. Wright, "The Endangered Black Male Child," ***Educational Leadership***, December, 1991/January, 1992, p. 14.

A society that relies on prisons to teach maturity lacks brains as well as heart. . . . It costs about $25,000 a year to keep a kid in prison. That's more than the Job Corps, or college. There's nothing inherently criminal in young black men of the 1990's any more than there was in young immigrant men of the 1890's. What is criminal is to write them off, fearfully, blind to the knowledge that thousands can be saved from lives of crime and for lives of dignity.

Editorial, ***The New York Times***, May 7, 1992

As the members of the Task Force on the African American Male prepared their final report, the trial of police officers accused of beating Rodney King came to an end in Los Angeles. The resulting disorders once again brought a national focus to a maligned and troubled segment of American society. By May, when the riots broke out, the collection of data by Task Force members had clearly shown what all of us felt: the African American male in the United States, at this point in the 20th century, is "endangered." Indeed, much of the research and many of the news articles we read used that exact term — endangered.

With compassion and a firm commitment to move beyond rhetoric and to effect change, the members of the Task Force elected to use a systematic approach to the urgent issue of the African American male in education and in society. The four areas of statistical research focused on education, family, community, and low achievement related to postsecondary attendance rates. Members of the Task Force then chose to utilize fully the expertise of one member of the group by focusing on early childhood research findings and language acquisition issues that related to the target group — African American males. Issues of curriculum were approached through the investigation of model programs in the United States. That research was then synthesized to show commonalities among some of the most successful of these programs. Finally, a preliminary investigation of community/school collaborations targeting African American males in North Carolina and other states was begun.

The report that follows uses the general outline of the Executive Summary and provides a fuller discussion of the major points of the research. Finally, the broader discussion of the Task Force Recommendations concludes this written report.

Much work remains to be done. This six-month task was overwhelming at times and the data we gathered were grim. The recommendations from our study are preliminary, but they are a beginning that **must** spur further discussion and, in some cases, immediate action. It is imperative that we as educators do not stand idly by and allow a significant portion of our society to continue to slip out of the mainstream American Dream into the nightmare of poverty, disorder, incarceration, and hopelessness. Because the members of this Task Force do care and must assume that all educators — and most Americans — also care, we are confident that attention will be paid to the subject of this study and written report — the African American Male.

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RESEARCH FOCUS

Research Focus One:

To determine the status of Pre-K through Grade 12 African Americans in North Carolina with special focus on the African American male

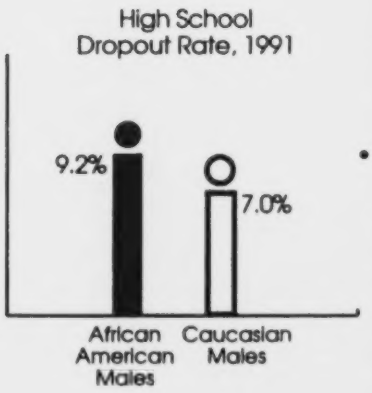
• Objective One: ***To compile statistical data related to education.***

• Comments: Research on the educational status of the African American male in our society reveals some alarming statistics. African American males are much more likely than other groups to score lower on standardized achievement tests, drop out of school before graduation, be labeled as mentally handicapped, be expelled from school, and be placed in low ability groups. Based on the examination of the data, it is evident that *all* African American students continue to be at-risk nationally and in North Carolina's public schools, but African American males tend to be at greater risk. While there are encouraging signs of improvement in the educational progress of African American students in recent years, there is still great disparity even in the face of "improvements." The following indicators reveal:

• Major Points:

- North Carolina's African American public school enrollment has increased from 29.6% in 1971 to 30.3% in 1991. At the same time the African American teacher force declined from 20.8% in 1979 to 16.2% in 1991. Currently, African American males account for 15.3% of the public school enrollments, while comprising only 2.9% of the teaching force (NCDPI: *Statistical Profile*, 1991).

- Although North Carolina Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores have gradually been increasing for African American students, SAT scores for African American students are consistently below those for whites. North Carolina's average SAT scores for 1991 were 400 for verbal and 444 for math. Scores for African American students increased by a total of eight points—two points on verbal (336) and six points on math (374). The combined SAT score for African American students (710) was 134 points lower than the state average and 206 points lower than the national average (NCDPI: *Education Report*, 1991).



- Statewide, the actual high school dropout rate decreased from 6.6% to 6.3% during the 1989-1990 school year (Child Index, 1991). During the same year the number of African American male dropouts increased from 19.7% to 20.%. African American males drop out of school at a much higher rate (9.2%) than do their white counterparts (7.0%). The three major reasons for dropping out were absenteeism, employment, and academic problems (NCDPI: *Dropout Data Report*, 1991).

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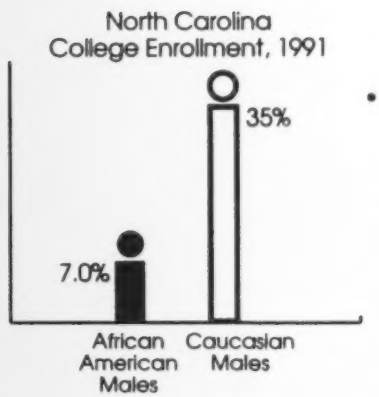
- While there have been some improvements in the placement of African American students in special education classes, African Americans are still disproportionately placed in special education programs. Representation of African American students in special education has declined gradually from 38% in 1987 to 36.3% in 1991. The representation of African American students in educable mentally handicapped programs has gradually declined from 59.4% in 1987 to 58.1% in 1991.

- Disproportions are starkest among African American students who make up less than 8% of all students placed in academically gifted programs; however, African American representation in academically gifted programs has gradually increased from 6.8% in 1987 to 7.9% in 1991. The only special education area showing no improvement among African Americans was in programs for the behaviorally-emotionally handicapped. African American students placed in behaviorally-emotionally handicapped programs showed a steady increase from 39.1% in 1987 to 42% in 1991 (NCDPI: Division of Exceptional Children's Services, 1987-1991).



- At the postsecondary level the North Carolina college enrollment rates of African American students as a percentage has increased from 17.7% in 1984 to 18.0% in 1991. Total enrollments of African American students in two- and four-year colleges and universities have increased from the fall of 1990 (60,603) to the fall of 1991 (63,940) — an increase of 5.2%. African American males account for 38% of the total African American student college enrollments. Only seven percent of North Carolina's 1991 college enrollees are African American males compared to 35% for white males. African Americans' greatest increase between 1990 and 1991 was experienced in community college enrollments (12.7%), while enrollments in technical community colleges (without transfer programs) suffered the only decline in African American enrollments (3.2%). Currently, 58% of African American college enrollments are in four-year colleges and universities (*Statistical Abstract, 1984-1991*).

- Research in effective schools demonstrates a high correlation between students' academic achievement and teacher expectations of students. Researchers in the area of teacher expectations and attitudes believe, in part, that low academic achievement, high dropout rates and the disproportionate placement of African American students in special education programs can be linked to negative attitudes and low expectations of school officials (teachers, counselors, psychologists, administrators) who make placement decisions (Gibbs, 1988). Studies in this area have found that white teachers are more likely than African American teachers to hold negative expectations for African American students, particularly African American males, and that white teachers are more likely than black teachers to be out of cultural sync with the African American students they teach (Irvine, 1990).

- The school performance of African American students is influenced by a number of variables. African American students are more likely than whites to be placed in classes for the educable mentally handicapped and for students with behavioral-emotional handicaps than in classes for the academically gifted. Research shows that African Americans, particularly African American males, are frequently the recipients of

negative attitudes by school staff, who also frequently hold low levels of expectations for their school performance. Because of such factors and conditions, it is regrettably understandable that many African American male students are at-risk in our public schools.

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• Objective Two: ***To compile statistical data related to the family.***

• Comments:

The prevalence of single-parent families has important implications for the resources available to children and the comparative future well-being of both African Americans and whites. Poverty among families headed by women is much higher than poverty among traditional, two-income, husband-wife families. For African Americans, 67 percent of all children living in female-headed families were in poverty in 1986. The one unmistakable conclusion from this examination of data is that family conditions of poverty, income levels and very low wealth place many African American children at considerable risk of having health problems, a poor education, and bleak future employment prospects. The major changes in America in the past five decades have been accompanied by significant alterations in the family lives of men, women, and, most importantly, children. Trends in fertility, marital status, and in patterns of child rearing have had important effects on both social and economic life. Since 1960, these trends in marital status, fertility, marital stability, and child rearing for both African Americans and whites have been similar. The changes, however, have been much more pronounced for African Americans than for whites. These trends include: lower marriage rates and a delayed age at first marriage; higher divorce rates; lower birth rates; earlier and increased sexual activities among adolescents; a higher proportion of births to unmarried mothers; higher percentages of children living in households headed by females; a higher proportion of women working outside the home; and a higher percentage of children living in poverty.

• Major Points:

- Although most teenagers live in two-parent families, nearly 50 percent of all African American teens live with only one parent, usually the mother. (Children's Defense Fund, 1990).
- More than 56 percent of families headed by single African American women are poor. (Pine, 1990).
- Poor children are much more likely than others to be exposed to lead from old paint and old plumbing fixtures and from the lead in household dust. (Pine, 1990)
- Sixty percent of all lead poisoning cases come from African American children of families earning less than $6,000 annually. (Pine, 1990).
- Children suffering from exposure to lead have an average I.Q. four to eight points lower than unexposed children, and they run four times the risk of having an I.Q. below 80. (Pine, 1990).
- Race, class, and education all affect youth employment: 80% of high school graduates from affluent families were employed, compared to one-fifth of African American dropouts. (Employment Security Commission, 1986).

- The unemployment rate for African American youth 16-19 years of age is three times that of white youth. (Employment Security Commission, 1986).

- Twenty-two percent of African Americans under age 65 are not covered by private health or medical insurance. (National Research Council, 1989).

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• Objective Three: *To compile statistical data relating to the community*

• Comments:

Evidence shows that an alarming percentage of African American males are economically disadvantaged, underemployed or incarcerated in North Carolina prisons for violent crimes and property offenses. Not only are significant numbers of offenses committed by African American males, but African Americans, in general, are also more likely to be victimized.

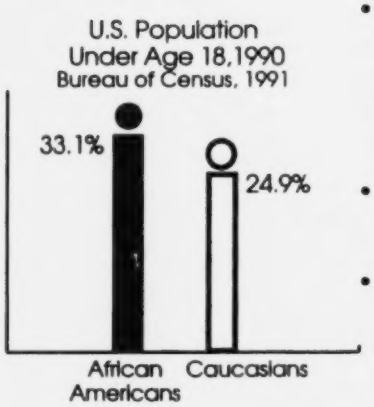
The earning power of African Americans is substantially less than that of Caucasians. Based on the examination of data, no significant gains were made in the median earnings of African American families between 1979 and 1989, while the median earnings of Causasian families continued to grow. Reports indicate that almost one-third of African Americans were poor by joint standards in 1989.

At-risk African American males need instruction for social survival skills to assist them in social adaptation and self-actualization. Extra influences such as mentors may be helpful in inspiring and redirecting African American males who are at-risk of being impoverished and incarcerated as adults. In addition, disproportionate numbers of African American youth are ill-equipped to perform in many entry level jobs; thus, it is imperative that at-risk students be provided opportunities to obtain marketable skills.

Disproportionate incarceration rates of African American males contribute to the formation of households headed by females. African American males are less available as stable marriage partners because "(a) their police records are barriers to legitimate work; (b) their low education skills preclude them from all but menial jobs; (c) their periodic court appearances prevent them from obtaining and maintaining steady work; and (d) incarceration at faraway prison facilities keeps them from their wives, girlfriends and children for long periods of time." (Hill,1988)

• Major Points:

- The African American population constitutes 12.1 percent of the U. S. population. The African American population grew 11.7 percent, faster than either the total or Caucasian population. (Bureau of the Census, 1991).



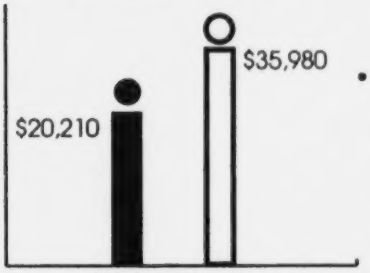
- African Americans have a larger proportion of youth under age 18 than do Caucasians. In March, 1990, approximately 33.1 per cent of the African American population was under 18 compared to 24.9 percent of the Caucasian population. (Bureau of the Census, 1991).
- In North Carolina, the African American male population under age 17 was 226,165. (Bureau of the Census, 1990).
- The unemployment rate of African American youth is nearly twice the rate of Caucasian youth. In the civilian labor force, the employment rate of African American youth is 17.5 percent in contrast to the rate of nine percent for many Caucasian youth. (Children's Index, 1991).

- Thirty-one percent, or 9.3 million of all African Americans, were poor by government standards in 1989; the difference is not significant from 1979.

- In 1989, the median yearly earnings for African American families had increased seven percent since 1979, while the yearly earnings of African American males declined by six percent during the same period. (Bureau of the Census, 1991).

- In 1989, African American families had a median income of $20,210. After adjusting for inflation, there was no significant difference between their 1979 median income, $19,770. The median income of Caucasian families in 1979 was $34,910 and rose to $35,980 in 1989. (Bureau of Census, 1991)

U.S. Median Income, 1989
Bureau of Census, 1991



- In 1990, there were 636,000 African Americans employed in the civilian workforce in North Carolina. Of this number, 21.2 percent worked in service occupations. Slightly above nineteen percent worked as machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors. On the other hand, only 2 percent worked as technicians; only about four percent functioned as executives. (U. S. Department of Labor, 1990).

- In general, African Americans shared a relatively small piece of the economic pie. In a December, 1990, newsletter, the NC State Data Center reported that black-owned firms represented six percent of all North Carolina firms and 1.6 percent of gross receipts. In 1987, these receipts were calculated around $746.1 million. North Carolina, however, fares slightly better than the nation; the state ranked ninth in the number of black-owned firms. Nationally, black-owned firms represent three percent of all firms and one percent of gross receipts. In North Carolina, the Raleigh/Durham metropolitan area has the largest number of black-owned firms.

- By 1990, Caucasian family incomes had risen significantly over a ten-year period; African Americans continued to suffer unequal economic status, making only modest gains in family income. The unemployment rate for African American youth is nearly twice the rate of white youth. In the civilian labor force, the employment rate of African American youth was 17.5 percent in contrast to the rate of nine percent among Caucasian youth. (U. S. Department of Labor, 1990).

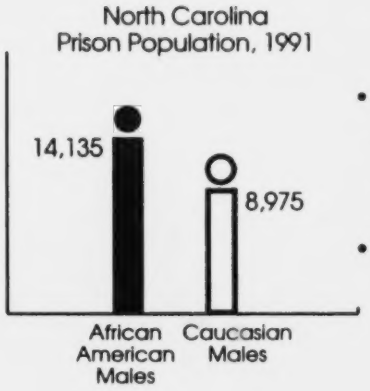
- African American males constitute six percent of the nation's population, but they are represented in staggering proportions in the prison population. In North Carolina, the prison population was comprised of 60 percent African American, 37 percent white, and 3 percent American Indian and other. (North Carolina State Data Center, 1990).

- African American males are the most common arrestees for larceny of motor vehicles, aggravated assault, assault with a dangerous weapon, murder by handgun, and forcible rape. The Uniform Crime Report (1990) indicates that almost 63 percent of property crimes involved larceny, 31 percent were burglary, and almost 6 percent were motor vehicle thefts. The most common offenses involved

larceny of motor vehicles, while the most common arrestee was an African American male, between the ages of seventeen and twenty-one. (N.C. Dept. of Justice, 1990).

- In North Carolina, the most frequent murder victims were African American males between age 25 and 29. (N.C. Dept. of Justice, 1990).

- Violent crimes include aggravated assault, rape, robbery and murder. Aggravated assault comprised 68 percent of these violent crimes, while robbery was almost 25 percent, murder was 1.7 percent, and rape was 1.5 percent. In this category, the most common offense involved assault with a deadly weapon, while the most common arrestee was an African American male, twenty-one years old.



- The total number of African American males in North Carolina prisons was 14,135 in 1991, while Caucasian male prisoners represented 8,975 during the same period (Department of Correction, Admissions Report, June, 1991).

- In North Carolina, white males constitute 40.7 percent of all supervised clients on parole and probation while African American males represent 38.7 percent of the clients (Department of Correction, Admissions Report, June, 1991).

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- **Objective Four:** ***To compile statistical data as it relates to low achievement and the postsecondary attendance rate of African American males.***

- **Comments:** During the 1991-92 school term, a group of vocational support personnel examined issues relating to low achievement and postsecondary attendance rates of African American males who graduated in 1991 from North Carolina public schools. A questionnaire was designed to collect the following information: (a) the reasons African American males were low achievers while enrolled in high school; (b)the postsecondary attendance rate of the subjects; and (c) the reasons they were not enrolled in postsecondary institutions.

The findings from this study were substantiated by current research in other states and in North Carolina. A six-year study conducted by Robert Bridges (1986) found that African American males lacked an "appreciation for excellence in school." In the first quarter of 1991, a North Carolina local school system reported two interesting facts: seventy percent of its African American males lacked an "appreciation for excellence in school," and seventy percent of its African American males received two or more D's or lower due to the same reason ("CHHS At Risk," 1991). In the North Carolina survey, the majority of the students interviewed related their low achievement in school to either a low value for education, a lack of motivation, or lack of skills.

Over 50 percent of the subjects in another study were not enrolled in postsecondary institutions. Lack of financial support (O'Neal, 1991; Fuhrman, Armour and Werner, 1991) and the preference to work were the major reasons for not attending college. However, the percentage of participants who preferred to work rather than attend college was almost equal to those experiencing financial difficulty. These responses correlated highly with the percentage of participants who either lacked motivation, placed low value on education, or lacked skills. Consequently, low achievement in high school often disqualified African American males from meeting postsecondary admission requirements (Gibbs, 1988).

The major reason African American males did not attend postsecondary institutions was financial limitations (Fuhrmann, Armour and Wergin, 1991). In 1990, over 60 percent of African American males in North Carolina were employed in lower paying jobs such as administrative support, service occupations, precision production, machine operator, and assemblers. When comparing North Carolina's African American males to their counterparts in states with a similar population, it was found that more African American males in this state worked full-time and part-time jobs for economic reasons (U.S.Department of Labor, 1990). With adult males in lower paying jobs, it stands to reason that the African American male would encounter financial problems (U.S. Department of Labor,1990).

North Carolina's attendance rate tends to be better than those of other states. Contrary to most research, 44 percent of the African American males interviewed were enrolled in postsecondary institutions. It was impossible for coordinators to control many of the

variables such as no telephones; consequently, persons with the most disadvantages were probably not reached. This survey data is summarized below:

• Major Points:

Reasons for Low Achievement

- Fifty-six percent of the participants indicated a low value for education as their rationale for not reaching their academic potential.
- Nineteen percent of the graduates indicated they lacked the motivation to aspire academically.
- Fifteen percent of the graduates perceived their low skills as the reason for their low achievement.
- Long work hours (4 percent) and poor attendance (3 percent) also contributed to low achievement.

Postsecondary Attendance Rate

- Twenty-five percent of the subjects polled were enrolled in community colleges.
- Sixteen percent of the participants were enrolled in colleges or universities.
- Eight percent of the young men enlisted in the military.

Reasons for Not Attending Postsecondary Institutions.

- Seventeen percent attributed lack of money as the reason given by polled students for not pursuing an education at the postsecondary level.
- Sixteen percent of the African Americans polled did not attend postsecondary institutions because they preferred to work.
- Seven percent of these young men had to work a year before entering a community college in the fall of 1992.
- Four percent of the subjects planned to enter the military at a later date.
- Three percent of the 1991 African American male graduates polled indicated that their failure to pass a competency test contributed to their failure to enroll in postsecondary institutions.

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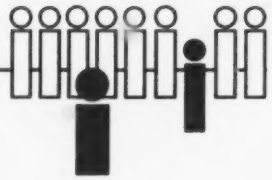

Research Focus Two:

To compile and evaluate education research to determine applicability for programs in North Carolina

• Objective One: ***To provide a summary of early childhood research findings and the implications for the education of African American males.***

• Comments:

Research in the area of early childhood methodology is extensive; however, many of the studies carried out during the past twenty years have been conducted with limited budgets, have focused on short-term impact and have included only small groups of children. For the purpose of this overview, only the most carefully designed and rigorously implemented studies are included. Even though the child population in many of the studies was mixed in terms of race and gender, the studies included a predominance of African American children. The hallmark Perry Preschool longitudinal studies are based on an all black population with 54 percent African American males. A composite picture of race and gender in the total body of research yields a 40-45 percent African American male population.

While the terminology in the studies varies, for our purposes the terms ***didactic*** and ***flexible*** will be used to distinguish between two ends of a continuum of program methodology. The following definitions are used throughout the overview:

- ***Didactic:*** Programs which are teacher-centered, which use external rewards and punishments, which consistently employ structured (often ability-grouped) class instruction and practice, which utilize abstract testing instruments and which place a high value on quiet learning environments.

- ***Flexible:*** Programs which encourage children's choice from a large variety of concrete, exploratory materials, which facilitate children's questions, which encourage a high level of interacting, which place a high value on children's emerging capacity to solve their own problems with a high level of adult support and guidance and which incorporate structured, observational assessment processes for analyzing growth.

• Major Points:

- It has been shown that children who experience a high level of activity with concrete, manipulative materials are more likely to approach the fulfillment of their mental capacity. (Levenstein, 1971, pp. 74-78; Bruner, 1976). Now, the physiological justification for this occurrence is known. The number of synaptic spaces which exists between brain cells has been found to be one determinant of human intelligence, and the number of synapses can be increased by adding manipulatives to the environment. (Shepherd, 1983; Restak, 1984, pp. 27-39).

- Children who have experienced flexible early childhood programs exhibit a higher level of independent initiative and task persistence than children who have experienced didactic programs. (Beller, 1973; 1983; Fagot, 1973; Huston-Stein, Fredrick-Cofer and Susman, 1977; Miller and Dyer,1975; Stallings, 1975).

- The use of external rewards and punishments reduces children's willingness to attempt more difficult tasks, to explore new challenges, and has a negative impact on internal motivation. (Cannella, 1986; Jensen and Moore, 1977; Gottfield, 1983; Miller and Dyer, 1975).

- Children who attend flexible programs are more highly motivated, have better attendance records and more frequently continue to pursue learning during the summer than children who attend didactic programs. (Stallings, 1975; Schweinhart and Weikart, 1980; Soar and Soar, 1969).

- Children who attend either didactic or flexible preschool programs tend to show improved academic scores on a short-term basis. Didactic programs produce a more dramatic short-term effect. Long-term effects, however, are more clearly cited for flexible programs. (Miller and Bizzell, 1983; Schweinhart and Weikart, 1980; Moore, 1977).

- Children who have experienced flexible programs exhibit a higher rate of graduation from high school and a higher capacity to cope with adult problems in the real world than their peers. Lower retention rates, dropout rates, remedial assistance rates, unemployment rates and teen pregnancy rates have been recorded. (Schweinhart et al., 1986; Berruta-Clement et al., 1984; Karnes et al., 1983).

- Involving parents in their child's educational program has a positive impact on improved parent attitudes and expectations, and on the child's performance, regardless of teaching methodology. (Weikart et al., 1978; Armstrong and Brown, 1979; Consortium of Longitudinal Studies, 1979; Fantini and Cardenas, 1980; Smith, 1980; Pierson, Walker and Tivnan, 1985).

- Children who are in centers with highly trained professionals, low group size as well as low adult-child ratios, progress at significantly higher levels than children in low quality centers. (Ruopp et al., 1979; Bruner, 1980; Stallings and Porter, 1980; Field, 1980; Smith and Connelly, 1981; Howes, 1983; Vandell and Powers, 1983; Clarke-Stewart and Gruber, 1984; McCartney, 1984; Berk, 1985; Hawes and Rubenstein, 1985; Hawes and Olenick, 1986; Phillips et al., 1987).

It can be concluded that high quality, flexible early childhood education programs produce superior long-term results in socio-economic/educational terms. When consideration is given to African American males as one population within the research, similar conclusions can be drawn due to the percentage of African American males involved in the studies.

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• Objective Two: ***To provide an overview of the research on the impact of cultural differences in language acquisition on African American children's success in school.***

• Comments: Research indicates that cultural variance in language acquisition has a dramatic influence on the language that children use and understand when they come to school. Children from low-income, African American families are at a significant disadvantage in trying to cope with the language of school because language usage in the home is markedly different from typical school language. It is also different from the language used for screening and assessment purposes. Variant interaction patterns can be found in three distinct categories among low-economic African American families.

• Major Points:

- The language of questions is used rarely and typically in a different manner from the questioning language of school. (Slobin, 1968; Heath, 1982; Ervin-Tripp, 1977).
- There is a distinct absence of the language of choice in low-income African American families compared to middle class families and language used in school. (Heath, 1982, 1983, 1991).
- The role of children in low-income, African American families is quite different from middle class or white families in that children in these families are not viewed as information givers nor conversationalists. (Heath, 1982, Clark-Johnson, 1988).

Quite simply, language is not acquired in the same manner in all cultures. For example, Heath reports that nearly 50 percent of the utterances between white, middle class parents and their children are in the form of questions. Low socioeconomic, African American families, on the other hand, use questioning language about 10 percent of the time when addressing their children. In fact, Heath notes that minority children most frequently are talked about or talked at rather than talked with. This variance is significant when consideration is given to the fact that "school language" is heavily oriented toward the language of questioning. The problem is further compounded when considered in the light of the language used in preschool screening instruments. Without a doubt, the screening process itself is a process of questioning. These questions focus on specific details pulled out of context. "What color is the ball?" "When do you eat breakfast?" "What is your name?" "Where do you live?" "Which shape is a circle?"

This form of question is alien to many African American children. In many black homes, the 10 percent of utterances which employ questions do not focus on isolated specifics. Rather, three predominant forms of questioning are used and appear in the form of (1) Analogy ("What's that like?") (2) Story Starter ("What happened to your leg?") or (3) Accusatory ("Where's your coat? You left it outside again, now go get it.") The how, when or where form of questioning is rarely used, and consequently, has not become a part of the child's language repertoire. These African American children from low-income families are automatically placed at a serious disadvantage. Not understanding the language of questions, they frequently

fail to respond at all or respond in ways that are perceived to be out of context or nonsensical. This same pattern is carried over to the early months of school as the child attempts to sort through the barrage of why, what, how, when or where questions that are so much a part of school talk.

In addition to the problem of understanding the language of questioning, these children are often baffled by the tentative language of choice. "Would you like to ...? Can you ...? Why not try ... ?" Low-income, African American families rarely use tentative language. Rather, children are told in explicit terms what to do, and have learned to respond accordingly. When faced with tentative language, many African American children completely ignore the request and are thus perceived as impudent or "out on a cloud."

Moreover, according to Heath, the entire family interaction system in low-economic, African American families differs from that of middle class, white families. Heath states, ". . .children were not viewed as information givers in their interaction with adults, nor were they considered appropriate conversation partners, and thus they did not learn to act as such. They were not excluded from language participation; their linguistic environment was rich with a variety of styles, speakers and topics. Language input was, however, not especially constructed for them; in particular, they were not engaged as conversationalists through special types of questions addressed to them."

While children are often the topic of conversation between adults, they are talked about rather than talked with. This pattern carries over to older siblings who are frequently left in charge of the care of younger children. Before many school years have passed, these children are often labeled "educationally deprived" or "mentally handicapped." In either case, more often than not, they are pulled out of their regular classroom for special help in one of a variety of programs which tend to operate with the same lack of understanding. Thus, the problem persists. Children who have functioned quite adequately in their own homes and communities are suddenly perceived to be inadequate in their new school environment (Clark-Johnson, 1988).

The problem, however, can be addressed if it is recognized for what it is — a cultural difference in the way language is acquired. The resolution is a two-way street leading from the home to the school and from the school to the home.

First, and possibly foremost, the school must gather information from the home. How has the child acquired language? What language patterns are utilized? What language is used by the child in the home?

Even though it is essential for the teacher to be aware of the generalities of cultural diversity in language acquisition patterns, it is equally important to recognize that differences exist among families within the culture. No two families ever use language in exactly the same manner, and consequently, no two children ever acquire language in exactly the same way. Even children within the same family will often experience different language acquisition patterns because adults in the family interact differently with different children. The point to be

made is that the teacher of young children from culturally diverse backgrounds must have knowledge of the use of language in the child's home. Without this knowledge, the teacher has no starting point with the child.

To gather this information, the parent is used as the primary resource. When parent information is added to personal observations made on home visits, the teacher can begin. The following suggestions are a compilation of success stories from many schools, but should not be taken to be all-inclusive.

1. Begin where the child is. Start by using language in the same manner it's used in the home.

2. Gradually, begin to model new uses of language.

3. Simultaneously, begin discussing the new uses of language with the parents (individually or in parenting sessions)

4. Create a flexible, exploratory, purposeful, learning environment which fosters child-initiated learning.

5. Train and utilize teaching peers from low achievers in upper grades.

6. Implement a whole language, continuous progress, reading/writing program which focuses on the child's real experiences.

7. Create a multicultural environment which honors every culture represented. Every child should feel as comfortable and as "at home" as every other child.

8. Group children heterogeneously within the school and within the classroom.

9. Provide individual assistance to children who are having difficulty functioning in the school setting. Some school systems are using Chapter 1 and Exceptional Children's teachers as one-on-one tutors for this purpose.

10. Establish a close relationship with the family of each child, which includes the valuing of information the parent possesses about the child.

11. Establish an on-site interagency network of services for assisting families in becoming self-sufficient. This network should include health care, employment assistance, parenting, nutrition and budget planning and adult literacy/education.

When these and similar strategies are employed, everyone profits. Teachers are more successful in their challenge of teaching every child. Children are more successful in their early years of school, and, subsequently, are more successful throughout their school years. And finally, families become more successful in meeting the total needs of the family as a unit. Family members also become better prepared to assist their young children in adapting to the school environment.

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• **Objective Three:** ***To provide an overview of curriculum strategies used by public schools in other states to address the needs of African American males and determine their feasibility for North Carolina.***

• **Comments:** The new programs for African American male students vary widely. Research by Ascher and others reveals that all or most of the programs are based in part on one or more of the following assumptions:

Appropriate Male Models/Male Bonding.
The first assumption is that African American male students suffer from a lack of appropriate male models in their neighborhoods, at home, and in the school and that they have few steady African American men with whom to bond. Most teachers are women. At the same time, "black children are surrounded by an over abundance of negative images of black men" (Pine, 1990). Thus, these programs offer positive images of African American adulthood through African American male teachers, mentors, advocates, and other role models, in an all-male classroom.

Identity/Self-Esteem.
A second assumption is that the self-esteem of African American male students in inner-city neighborhoods is battered by the pervasive negative images of blacks on streets, in schools, and in the media. Thus, the programs attempt a kind of consciousness-raising, by teaching the dual-continental history of African Americans and making clear the achievements and contributions of blacks in both Africa and America. Also, because negative media images can cause teachers to doubt their African American male students' chances for success, program teachers need to be carefully selected and trained (Ascher, 1991).

Academic Values and Skills.
Because the values and discipline necessary for achievement are absent in much of ghetto life, the programs attempt to combat the "fear of acting white" that hinders school achievement, and to develop an alternative system of African American values and social skills that will facilitate success. For example, they mandate strict attendance, provide assistance with schoolwork, help students develop nonviolent conflict resolution skills, and promote responsible sexual norms.

Parent and Community Strengthening.
The programs are often directed particularly to African American males from fragmented and stressed families. They assume that these boys and youth must learn responsibility to their homes and communities, at the same time bringing in parents and community members to help in the development. Thus, many programs have a community service component, try to bring community members into the classroom as mentors and in other roles, and demand that parents commit themselves to some form of participation.

Transition to Manhood.
The assumption is that fatherless boys may encounter particularly difficult transitions from boyhood to manhood and that many adolescents who are having difficulty moving toward manhood participate in gangs as a spontaneous form of initiation rite. Possibly the most

innovative aspect of these programs, therefore, is the use of formal "initiation rites" to direct and dignify the transition to manhood. These initiation rites programs generally cover a year and may include acquiring new knowledge and following rules of conduct, keeping a journal, creating a genealogical chart of the boy's family, providing community service, and finally, participating in a special ceremony. Instruction for initiation rites is often through packaged programs and from private sector consultants. (Hare,1985; Hill, 1987)

Safe Haven.
Finally, and underlying all other components, is the conviction that many low-income African American males need an environment that shelters them from, and is a positive alternative to, their subcultures. Thus programs often protect students from the street by extending the school day and adding a Saturday component.

• Major Points:

- **Project 2000,** a program operated by the Center for Education of African American Males at Morgan State University. Volunteers work with elementary school-age black males in the Baltimore City Public Schools, becoming involved in their daily school activities. Their purpose is to give the young boys positive examples of black men. (Gibbs, 1991)

- **African American Emersion Program at Milwaukee's Victor Berger Elementary School.** This pilot program will have an Afrocentric curriculum; students will not be segregated by gender. An Afrocentric curriculum opens the doors to other cultures as they relate to the continent of Africa. Focus is placed on the African culture by emphasizing the contributions made by Africans and those of African descent to the rest of the world — much the way Europeans have connected their ancestral contributions to the world. (Jones, 1991)

- **Pine Villa Elementary School in South Dade County, Florida**. This program emphasizes the cultural and academic development of the black male child at the earliest possible level in public school—kindergarten. This program established an all black male kindergarten class taught by an African American male teacher. The program strives to develop a positive self-concept within these young boys, as well as the motivation to succeed in spite of their circumstances. Students in the "black male" kindergarten class scored 7-11% higher on standardized tests of sounds and letters than students in the regular co-educational class. (Wright, 1990)

- **Dr. James Comer** of Yale University has been working with the Baldwin School and the King School in New Haven since 1968. His purpose is to enhance the achievement in those schools, to enhance the morale of the teachers and to make good, total learning environments. (Comer, 1989)

- **Ujamaa Institute** of New York City differs from many other programs in that it is neither single sex nor single race. The student body is mixed as in any other alternative, specialized high school in the city. The unique feature of this school is its special focus on providing a multicultural education to reflect the population of the melting pot of a city. (Jones, 1991)

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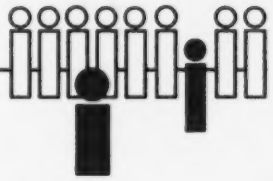

Research Focus Three:

To identify existing resources available to African American children in North Carolina

• Objective One: ***To compile a list of current funding sources for such programs.***

• Comments: In collaborative ventures to create new services for African American children, resources of all kinds must be pooled and reconfigured to provide more comprehensive services. The way in which schools and human service agencies use existing resources, or the manner in which essential new resources are deployed, can be changed to create more comprehensive services to all children. Integrating resources can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of educational, health, and other social services of all children — especially those whose needs are greatest.

• Major Points:

- **Funding**. Policy makers need to support coordination of services with money. Without adequate funding, coordinated services become more difficult to create, maintain, and expand.
- **Advocacy**. Coordination of services does not have to start with state and federal policy-makers. Parents, school practitioners, community activists, and local social services staff can advocate for integrated services at schools or for whatever strategy best suits their community.
- **Leadership**. Local school councils, parent associations, and principals can take leadership roles in building school-based teams that work together with community agencies and other school staff in identifying children having difficulty before problems erupt.
- **Participation**. Create mechanisms for inviting participation of families in decision-making about delivery of services, in planning and assessing student needs, and in evaluating programs. Programs can be made stronger if the people being served have a genuine role in shaping them.
- **Resources and current distribution of available funds for North Carolina children and families.**
  - Federal Resources: Department of Education, Department of Justice, Department of Health and Human Services, and Champus.
  - Non-Governmental Resources.
  - State and Local Resources.

• Objective Two: ***To compile a representative annotated list of current programs that use existing resources in a collaborative model.***

• Comments:

For many years, inequities in educational opportunities for all Americans were tolerated, ignored, or only partially addressed. For the last decade, there has been a resurgence of the national will to right this grievous wrong. Across the nation a multiplicity of programs are nurturing, prodding, and moving traditionally underepresented minority children through the education pipeline. These programs are conveying a message of hope. Experience proves that remarkable changes can occur if students feel that someone cares personally for them. Programs that successfully address the multiple problems of at-risk children and families have a number of common characteristics:

- They are comprehensive, coherent, integrated, and flexible.
- They cross traditional bureaucratic and professional boundaries.
- They deal with the child as part of the family and the family as part of the community.
- They make sure that staff members have the time, training, and skills necessary to build relationships of trust and respect with children and families.
- They design the content of their services to address the special needs of the people they are serving.

• Major Points:

- **Department of Labor.** The administration recently looked at its major program that serves adults and youth–the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). The Labor Secretary outlined a major policy shift in JTPA to focus the services provided on the most disadvantaged. Funds are to be targeted at geographic areas with higher numbers of economically and educationally disadvantaged persons.

- Job Corps. A training effort for adolescents that is intensively funded by the Department of Labor.

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Funding and program initiatives include proposed legislation to combine the authorities for Foster Care and Adoption Assistance administrative and training costs, the Independent Living Initiative, and Child Welfare Services into one appropriated State Grant program.

- U.S. Department of Education. The 1990 budget included increased support for programs serving disadvantaged elementary and secondary school children.

- The U.S. Department of Education recommended a series of initiatives designed to provide increased assistance to education. These include increased funding for Merit Schools, scholarships to encourage students to take more courses in sciences and mathematics, and grants to urban school systems to develop approaches for eliminating drugs from schools.

- U.S. Department of Justice. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) provides leadership and

resources to states and localities to implement the mandates of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. OJJDP provides information, training, and technical assistance for programs for state and local agencies and juvenile justice practitioners. New initiatives of the OJJDP include helping communities combat youth gangs, working to reduce illegal drug use among high risk youth, developing responses to serious juvenile crime, and reducing the incidence of crime against children, particularly sexual exploitation.

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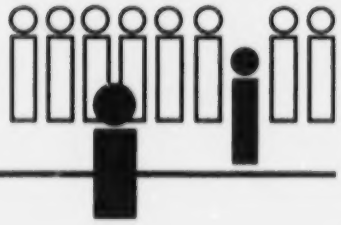
Task Force Recommendations



STAFF DEVELOPMENT

SD 1. The Department of Public Instruction should make available staff development opportunities that increase administrators, staff and teachers' abilities to work with diverse students. Regardless of their own background, DPI, as well as local school personnel should be prepared to work with children of diverse ethnic origins, cultural traditions, and languages. DPI professional staff, local administrators and teachers need training and assistance to accomplish these important tasks. It is important for all educators to:

- be advocates for change
- hold the highest expectations for African American males
- be knowledgeable about the culture of African American males
- be aware of the cultural differences in language acquisition of some minority students, and factor in these differences when developing Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) and learning stations
- encourage, support and/or offer instruction that reflects and respects cultural differences
- encourage, support and/or use effective strategies such as cooperative learning, peer tutoring, and mixed ability groups.

SD 2. Institutions of higher education should work as active partners in Initial Certification Programs by helping prospective teachers develop requisite skills necessary to deal with an increasingly diverse school population and by providing follow-through at school sites.

SD 3. The Department of Public Instruction should be in the forefront in providing staff development sessions that will help provide teachers with alternative instructional strategies to the following common practices:

a. Ability groupings
b. Retention in grade
c. Over-utilization of textbooks as the sole learning resource
d. Low expectations based on family background or stereotypes
e. Passive learning environments/over-use of lecture method
f. Over-emphasis on low-level memory skills
g. Weak linkages to home.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

CI 1A. The Department of Public Instruction should take immediate steps to ensure that current curriculum revisions in all content areas include the perspectives, contributions and impact of a variety of cultural groups, including African Americans.

CI 1B. Moreover, the Department should respond to the need to develop more culturally-appropriate and culturally-sensitive assessment materials. The Agency should develop multi-faceted ways to evaluate students such as portfolios, writing samples, and criterion-referenced tests which reflect the revised *Standard Course of Study* in the arts, communication skills, healthful living, mathematics, social studies, science, and second languages.

CI 2. The Department of Public Instruction should reaffirm our commitment to the the traditional premises of "Effective Schools" that "all students can learn." Moreover, the Agency should increase our efforts to ensure that this premise is included in all pilots and models endorsed or sponsored by the Agency to include outcome-based education.

CI 3A. The Department of Public Instruction should ensure that sufficient attention is given in all its endeavors to enhancing students' personal growth and their developing positive self-images. This would be especially significant in enhancing the achievement levels of African American males.

CI 3B. Local school systems can help students develop a proud sense of self-worth and positive self-image by requiring: a positive environment of high expectations, appropriate levels of demands, structured multiple opportunities for success, positive reinforcements, and multiple tangible and intangible rewards.

CI 3C. DPI, in conjunction with local school systems, should continue efforts to increase the ability of parents and caregivers to support their children's education and well-being by taking steps to:

- Train parents to become an active political group who can assist educators in the school system in providing a superior education for their children.
- Encourage parents to become active participants in the education of their children by: visiting the school frequently and assuring that their children are in school daily, that they are prepared to perform fully, and that they will abide by school rules and regulations.
- Support home-school partnerships in which families agree to take specific steps to encourage their children to study.
- Provide collaborative interagency services.

CI 4. The Department of Public Instruction, the State Board of Education and the North Carolina General Assembly should continue their commitment to the Basic Education Program, including full funding for instructional support personnel (psychologists, counselors, media coordinators, and school nurses.) Full funding for this category of positions is essential to the support of such programs as the Family Preservation Effort.

INITIATIVES

IN 1. The Department of Public Instruction should extend the work of the Task Force on the African American Male through the establishment of a Council on the African American Male. Because the report and recommendations outlined by this task force should in no way be considered a FINAL report, it is recommended that a Council be formed, with representation from throughout the Agency. This Council should be charged with the development of a Master Plan which will clearly delineate the manner in which the Department of Public Instruction will correct the problems identified within the report and implement the task force's recommendations.

IN 2. The Department of Public Instruction, in conjunction with local education agencies, should include African American male students in defining the problem and developing solutions.

IN 3. Given the current shortage of African American male teachers, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction should support the recruitment of these teachers by instituting/supporting the following efforts:

- Establish a national data-bank for listing administrative as well as instructional vacancies from across the state.
- Establish a toll-free number for posting instructional vacancies from across the state. The toll free number should become an important element in a national outreach initiative, sponsored by the Agency, to identify and attract African American educators to our state.
- Provide full funding for programs that promote the recruitment of African American teachers such as Project TEACH.
- Create a national merit scholarship program offering grants to African American college students who agree and are prepared to enter the teaching profession for at least three years after graduation.
- Earmark funds from existing teacher scholarship programs such as the Prospective Teacher Scholarship for African American males aspiring to become teachers in North Carolina.

IN 4. The Department of Public Instruction should earmark research and development dollars to fund at least three pilots that would use research-tested strategies and approaches to support African American males and their families from birth to graduation from high school.

IN 5. The Department of Public Instruction should support legislation that will provide full funding for programs for unserved preschool children and their families.

IN 6. The Department of Public Instruction should support and expand the "One Voice Community" concept.

IN 7. The Department of Public Instruction should provide funding and technical assistance to community-based programs that empower the African American male with the skills, self-confidence and sense of achievement that produce a self-assured person.

IN 8. The Department of Public Instruction, in conjunction with local education agencies, should encourage and support with technical assistance, the establishment of mentoring programs using African American males.

IN 9. The Research and Development area of the Department of Public Instruction should compile and maintain data relative to African American males, i.e., educational status, special education, standardized test scores, etc.

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